

Siskiyou County Water Users



March 23, 2015

Senate Committee Environment and Natural Resources
Chairman Chris Edwards
900 Court Street
Salem, Oregon

Re: Hearing on SB 206; 264; 265

Dear Chair Chris Edwards and Members of SENR,

I am President of the Siskiyou County Water Users representing a substantial segment of Siskiyou County water users both agricultural and residential. We conducted a referendum in a General Election known as Measure G which received a resounding percentage of the popular vote for keeping the Klamath Dams in place. Nearly 80% of the voters expressed their belief that the dams were important to keep to provide low cost electrical power from a clean hydro source, the beneficial aspects in terms of recreation that the dams provide, the positive effects of a process of settling and cooling the sediments in the Klamath River; the ability of the dams to provide flood protection; the ability to flush the river system in times of drought; and the ability of Iron Gate Dam to provide cool water for the fish hatchery located there which provides annually millions of salmon fingerlings to the Klamath River system.

We are also aware as you should be that the dams if removed will result in the contamination below the dams of nearly 200 miles of river bed; the destruction of aquatic life forms and those dependent on their existence. The KBRA and KHSA agreements are a disaster waiting to happen. Built on "junk science" manipulated by the Department of Interior and related federal and state agencies working hand in hand with non-governmental environmental groups who stand to gain substantially from the public coffers to repair a damaged eco system that will be created by removal of dams makes no economic sense.

The stalking horse in this case is the supposed environmentally challenged Coho Salmon. It is well known that the Coho range is from North of San Francisco Bay up through the Bering Straits all the way to the Sea of Japan. The productive capacity and quantity of Salmon is influenced by the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) not by the riverine system which has been the justification for dam removal. The PDO is a cyclical process of ocean currents passing along the Pacific Coast which fluctuates in terms of temperature from warmer to colder water. The Salmon and their food source following the cold water flow which runs up and down the coast to Alaska. This is well documented by several scientific studies conducted by the University of Washington. The author of the original study is the highly regarded marine scientist Dr. Nathan Mantua of the JISAO in 1997. This study was contained in Abstract in Vol. 78, No. 6, June 1997 of the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society. A copy can be made available. Dr. Mantua is now with the NOAA department. The study was collaborated a decade later by another scientist Dr. Rogers.

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What is important about this study and others of like kind, is that it is left out of the scientific discussion, because it doesn't suit the political desires of the Department of Interior or the NGOs. The dam removal process is about money and politics it isn't about saving the Salmon. Dr. Paul Howser found out the hard way just how vindictive the DOI could be. We also have the failed DOI study that became infamous and for which they were reprimanded for manipulation of a supposedly public study of support for dam removal. This is the study in which the DOI worked with an "independent" agency to develop at a cost of nearly \$500,000 a questionnaire that would get the answers they wanted even if it meant paying the individual to provide an answer.

The State of Oregon should recognize that the KBRA is a morally bankrupt organization which is coming apart at the seams. The bills at hand should not be passed because they are based on the false premise of the dams being destroyed and a third party organization taking over the water management of the region.

The Klamath Compact is the law of the Klamath. This treaty is intact and provides the guidance and management of the Klamath Basin waters by its charter which includes a priority of uses of those waters. Siskiyou County through the efforts of Senator Ralph Collier and the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors together with visionaries from Oregon and COPCO provided the moral framework for the future of the Klamath Basin. The KBRA and the KHSR are renegade concepts with no attempt to provide a realistic future for "ALL" in the Klamath Basin. Considering the current potential for drought and water shortages we should be looking at development of preservation and retention of "excess" waters during heavy water runoff periods to provide for the intelligent use of water to provide for both public uses and environmental uses.

Sincerely yours

Richard Marshall, President
Siskiyou County Water Users Association Inc.